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Life Story of a National Socialist

ENTRY INTO WRITING CONTEST FOR NSDAP PARTY MEMBERS



by Heinrich Mayer

I was born on November 26, 1902 in Ansbach in Middle Franconia, the son of Karl May, a master baker and military officer. When I was 10 years old, my father's transfer to the Landau Provincial Office brought me to the beautiful Rhine Palatinate. I got to know and love my new home through Sunday walks, the Palatinate Forest with its legendary castles and wine made for a cheerful atmosphere. Then came the fateful year of 1914, which brought the world war.

We boys were full of enthusiasm: victory after victory was won and our home soil was kept free of the enemy. For us schoolboys, the victories were holidays. I was very curious when the first prisoners arrived. The French with their red pants were the ones we liked the most. But when the blacks came too, we marvelled at how black they were, and yet we were terrified of them. So one year of war after another went by despite the hope that the war would soon be over. I left elementary school and was apprenticed to a horticultural company

to become a gardener, which I did joyfully and successfully. Then came the year 1918, and the mood among the people became more and more disgruntled as the war lasted so long and food became increasingly scarce. We had no idea about politics. But it became increasingly clear that agitators were at work, inciting the people against each other. Then came the bitter end: collapse of the homeland; peace at any price; retreat of the front. The front troops marched impeccably and orderly through Landau to cross the Rhine, as the enemy was pressing on to occupy the area. I can't forget one experience, when the last company passed through here, front-line soldiers with hard faces under their steel helmets, that I suddenly shed tears of despair at the fate that awaited us and that the homeland was so weak-willed. Over the next few days, the French arrived and occupied the Rhine Palatinate; everything was full of trepidation: What will they do? They marched through the streets of the city to the sound of music. Most people stayed at home in order not to see.

Then came the first order concerning my parents: We had to vacate the apartment within 8 hours. Half an hour before the deadline expired, we still didn't know where to put our things. So we had to move into a vacant apartment in the city as emergency accommodation. In most cases, two families had to be accommodated in one apartment until there were enough apartments available again. In the meantime, I went to work in Kaiserslautern and Ludwigshafen. Here I met fellow workers who were members of various parties, but I couldn't decide to join any party, because here, too, the workers' disagreements were in the foreground so that they could be played off against each other. At the end of April, I accepted a position as a trainee at the horticultural school in Weißenstephan-Freising. The journey through the German countryside via Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, Munich and Freising was wonderful.

May 1st was celebrated in Freising. That was the first time I saw the contrasts between students and workers. I also saw men with swastika armbands for the first time. In Munich, I noticed large red posters on the billboards with the name Adolf Hitler. I was interested in the name and also in the men wearing the swastika. On my daily commute to work, I passed a store where the men with the swastika armband frequented. A flyer invited me to a consultation evening, which I attended. This was the first time I heard the program that the National Socialist Party had set out and to which I subscribed. I often went to Krone Circus in Munich to hear and see Adolf Hitler. It was always a wonderful

experience and a deepening of the ideas of the program that the Führer had set himself. **I became a fighter for Adolf Hitler, joined the party and the SA. In the SA I found what I had long been looking for: not class struggle, but true socialism, coupled with nationalism, comradeship and loyalty.** So, Sunday after Sunday, we went out into the countryside and into the cities to carry the idea and the belief in Germany and to drive the people's movement forward.

The first German Day in Nuremberg brought together the combat units that wanted to march with us. Propaganda marches through Landshut and Passau with Göring and Strasser helped to show the people that the national community was marching here. Workers, students, farmers, front-line soldiers and young people in the post-war period.

I started my journey home to attend the second course at the agricultural college in Landau. Passive resistance had begun during the occupation of the Ruhr.

The railroads were under French control, German officials and railroad workers were expelled. No Germans traveled on the trains. So I walked from Karlsruhe to Landau with contempt in my heart for the enemy that we had to tolerate and who was trying to seize German land with the help of traitors. But the unanimous defense of the Palatinate folk, regardless of party, put an end to this game.

Old comrades meet, experiences are exchanged; there is no difference whether Bavarian or Prussian, Saxon or Rhinelander. We are Germans. The elections brought the SA work in abundance. "We move forward!" was the slogan. The party governments wanted to suppress us, but they could do so no longer, because the majority of the people had a faith again. I worked in a horticultural business in Landau. I was there for five years and did nothing wrong. Then I was suddenly made redundant because of a shortage of money, but it soon turned out differently: the Jews who bought from the business asked me to leave; otherwise they would no longer buy anything from the company. So I lost my bread and shared the fate of being unemployed with many of my comrades.

We now had free time. Every available moment belonged to the movement. No man stood back, everyone wanted to do more. I have been married since 1927.

In 1928 there was a new addition to the family, a strapping boy was born. So we also experienced the hardships of the time and unemployment. We didn't go astray, because we had a belief that things would get better one day, which kept us going. Because there were people who were even worse off and who were only driven to communism or death by their hardship.

The KPD went to destroy, we held our heads high and wanted to build. The SA was banned. The police were sent out to confiscate the dangerous uniforms. They made fools of themselves and found nothing. **National Socialists were now everywhere. Faith in the Führer Adolf Hitler grew stronger.** Then came the anxious days of 1933: what was the Commune up to? But then came the redemptive news: Hindenburg had summoned Hitler. On the night of January 30, our Führer Adolf Hitler had become Reich Chancellor. The expected resistance from the KPD and SPD did not materialize. They were defeated without weapons. The leaders of these parties were arrested, including some Jews who had been their financial backers.

Then came the rush of people's comrades to the party. Everyone wanted to join, but we had to refuse and only allowed them to join after strict checks. The new government passed laws and regulations to support the state. Our main task now was to find work, to get old SA men back into work, which was partly successful. I gave up my job as a gardener and am now a cashier and janitor. May we soon succeed in getting every German back to work and forming a nation that means: Germany for the Germans!

Heil Hitler!

Heinrich Mayer

Landau